

Loudoun County Animal Care & Control

Top 10 Cold Weather Pet Care Tips



1. Keep cats inside. Outdoor cats are vulnerable to frostbite, hypothermia, and can freeze to death.
2. Never let your dog off its leash in the winter. Dogs can lose their scent in ice and snow and become easily lost. As at any time of year, make sure your dog has proper ID at all times in case he does become lost.
3. Don't leave your pet in the car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator, holding in cold air. Your pet can freeze to death.
4. During cold weather, cats and small animals sometimes take refuge in car engines for warmth. Always bang on the hood of the car before you start the engine to give the animal a chance to escape.
5. Be sure to wipe your dogs' paws and stomach after coming inside from ice or snow. Your dog can ingest salt, antifreeze, or other agents by licking his paws clean. Your dog's paw pads can also become irritated from encrusted snow or ice.
6. Never shave your pet down to the skin in cold weather, as a longer coat is warmer. Be sure your pet is completely dry before going outside after a bath.
7. Does your pet spend a lot of time playing outside in winter? Increase his food intake to help keep him energetic and warm.
8. Antifreeze is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Be sure to clean any spills completely, and store antifreeze in a place your pets can't reach. Consider using products with the less toxic ingredient propylene glycol.
9. Consider a coat or sweater for your pet if he is small, young, elderly, or short haired. Be sure it covers from the neck to the base of the tail as well as under the belly.
10. Be sure your pet has a warm place to sleep, off the floor, away from drafts, and with cozy blankets or pillows to cuddle in.



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